

REMARKS

Claims 1-7, 9-11, 13-19 and 21-22 are now pending in the application. Of the pending claims, claims 3-6 and 13-16 have been withdrawn from consideration. No new matter has been added. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 11, 17, 19, 21 and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Barth (U.S. Pat. No. 4,955,744) in view of Ohmi (U.S. Pat. No. 4,305,441) and further in view of New (U.S. Patent No. 3,491,602), Feng et. al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,467,368), and Hitomi (U.S. Patent No. 6,848,642). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The establishment of a *prima facie* case of obviousness requires that three basic criteria be met: 1) some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine the reference teachings, 2) that there must be a reasonable expectation of success, and 3) that the prior art reference or references must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. *See, e.g., In re Vaeck*, 947 F.2d 488 (Fed. Cir. 1991).

Regarding the requirement for teaching or suggesting all claim elements, Applicants note that Claim 11 has been amended to include a lever extendable from a first position to a second position from the clamp assembly for increasing the amount of torque to the clamp assembly. Claim 11 now recites “wherein the blade clamp assembly further comprises a lever extendable from the clamp assembly for increasing the amount of torque to the clamp assembly, the lever

movable from a first position to a second position where the lever extends outwardly from the clamp assembly in the second position.”

The combination of Barth and Ohmi in view of New, Feng, or Hitomi does not teach or suggest Applicants’ invention, as neither Barth or Ohmi employs or suggests a clamp assembly including a lever extendable from the clamp assembly for increasing the amount of torque to the clamp assembly. Furthermore, neither Feng, New, or Hitomi teach, suggest, or disclose an extendable lever movable from a first position to a second position where the lever extends outwardly from the clamp assembly in the second position. Feng, New, and Hitomi each disclose a fixed, non-extendable lever that is mounted on or attached to a bicycle handlebar, a switch housing, or a fishing reel, respectively. Moreover, there is no suggestion or motivation in Feng, New, and Hitomi to change or alter the disclosed levers from fixed and non-extendable to extendable since each of the levers are located or used in areas and applications with little or no space and/or balance constraints.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants submit that the Examiner has not presented a *prima facie* case of obviousness.

In view of the above remarks, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claim 11. Since claims 17-19 depend from claim 11, for the same reasons applicable to claim 11, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 17-19.

With respect to claim 21, Applicants note that claim 21 had been amended in the previous Amendment to include keyed surfaces on the blade engaging means. Claim 21 recites “wherein the blade engaging means and the clamping means include means for engaging.”

The combination of Barth and Ohmi does not teach or suggest Applicants' invention, as neither Barth or Ohmi employs or suggests a clamp assembly including a body have a keyed bottom surface or a blade washer having a keyed upper surface for engaging the keyed bottom surface of the body of the clamp assembly. As the Examiner indicated in the Office Action, Barth fails to disclose, teach, or suggest a blade washer. Although, Ohmi discloses clamping discs, the discs do not have a keyed surface and, furthermore, Ohmi fails to even teach or suggest clamping discs having keyed surfaces.

In addition, New, Feng, and Hitomi also fail to disclose, teach, or suggest the use of a blade washer, let alone a blade washer having a keyed surface. Accordingly, the incorporation of New, Feng, and Hitomi fails to rectify the issues discussed above.

In view of the above remarks, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claim 21. Since claim 22 depends from claim 21, for the same reasons applicable to claim 21, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claim 22.

ALLOWED SUBJECT MATTER

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that claims 1, 2, 7, 9, and 10 have been allowed.

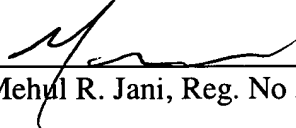
CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and

complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (410 716-2886.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 11/1/06

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